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CONFERENCE ON THE UN DECADE FOR WOMEN

DEAN ACHESON AUDITORIUM
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

September 12, 1979

8:45 a.m.	Registration
Moderator:	George A. Dalley Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and Social Affairs Bureau of International Organization Affairs
9:30 a.m.	<u>Welcoming Remarks</u> Hodding Carter III Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and Department Spokesman
9:40 a.m.	Sarah Weddington Assistant to the President
9:50 a.m.	<u>U.S. Participation in the Mid-Decade Conference</u> Charles William Maynes Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs
10:35 a.m.	BREAK
10:55 a.m.	Lynda Johnson Robb Chair President's Advisory Committee for Women
11:05 a.m.	<u>Panel - UN Preparations for the Mid-Decade Conference</u> Lucille Mair <i>Marcella Martin</i> Secretary-General of the 1980 World Conference of the UN Decade for Women Koryne Horbal U.S. Representative on the Commission on the Status of Women of the Economic and Social Council of the UN Virginia Saurwein Chief, of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, Department of International Economic and Social Council of the UN
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH

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Moderator: Patt Derian
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Human Rights and
Humanitarian Affairs

2:00 p.m. Panel - The Conference Subthemes:
U.S. Perspective

Mary Frances Berry
Assistant Secretary for Education
Department of Health, Education
and Welfare

Mary Hilton
Deputy Director, Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor

Julius B. Richmond
Assistant Secretary for Health
Department of Health, Education
and Welfare

Marjorie Bell Chambers
Vice Chair
President's Advisory Committee
for Women

4:00 p.m. BREAK

Moderator: Goler T. Butcher
Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Africa
Agency for International Development

4:15-5:45 p.m. Panel - Conference Theme:
Third World Perspective

Nadia Youseff - *Egypt Research*
International Center for Research
on Women - *Dev & 3rd Wld Emp*
in Income generation

Kaval Gulhati
Center for Population Activities

Mary Tadesse, *Chief Ethiopia*
African Research and Training
Center for Women

6:00-7:30 p.m.

Ed Training
The Secretary's Reception - Sec. of State,
Cyrus Vance
Benjamin Franklin Room
Eighth Floor

OVERSEAS EDUCATION FUND of the League of Women Voters
2101 L Street, N.W., Suite 916, Washington, D.C., 20037

CONFERENCE ON THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN
U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.
September 12, 1979

The State Department Conference was a meeting called to offer representatives of non-governmental organizations and the private sector an opportunity to discuss with ranking U.S. Government Officials the U.S. preparations for the World Conference of the U.N. Decade for Women. This day-long meeting was attended by approximately 800 women.

The Mid-Decade Conference will meet in Copenhagen, Denmark, July 14 through 30, 1980. The conference will review the progress made and the obstacles encountered in carrying out the World Plan of Action adopted by the 1975 Mexico Conference. Special attention will be directed toward a programme for the next five years, with specific emphasis on the areas of Employment, Health, and Education. Representatives from the Departments of Health, Education, and Labor (employment) briefed us on the accomplishments made by this administration in these fields. The Mid-Decade Conference will also discuss the situation of apartheid on women in southern Africa and draft special measures for assistance. The problem of refugee Palistinian women will also be a part of the agenda.

There will be two conferences in Copenhagen, running simultaneously - the official U.N. Conference and the Forum (same as the Tribune in Mexico City) which will be open to all NGO's and all women. The U.S. Delegation will consist of approximately 25 persons, and the criteria for choosing these delegates became the hottest issue of the meeting. The U.S. plans to choose most of the delegates from among federal employees. This was a decidedly unpopular decision. A second issue of great concern to the audience was the desire to have on the delegation feminist, Black, Asian, lesbian, the disabled and other special interest groups.

The theme of the last panel of the day was on the Third World Perspective. Three speakers gave an excellent presentation of the problems facing women in the developing countries and brought an international perspective to the meeting. Nadia Youseff, from Egypt, and now at the International Center for Research on Women, stated that solving the problems of poor men does not solve the problems of poor women. Women are still faced with the problems of poverty, unemployment, and displacement from traditional roles.

Kaval Gulhati from India, now at the Center for Population Activities, stated that women's struggle is greater because they start at a lower base - women are at the bottom 40% of the poorest of the poor. Women need training opportunities at the local level to give them skills and confidence. Train women who can train other women. She also urged women-to-women delivery of health services.

Mary Tadesse, from Ethiopia, now at the African Research and Training Center for Women, also urged trainers for women. In west Africa, 60-80% of labor for food production is provided by women. They need technical training. The problems and needs of children can not be separated from the needs of women - need a multi-faceted approach. Legal rights for women are not enough.

The Third World perspective panel brought to the meeting the fact that the Mid-Decade Conference is an international conference and it must try to solve the world problems of women and not just those of the United States. The meeting needed the world perspective.

Official State Department papers are now being drafted for the Mid-Decade Conference, which will state the U.S. positions to be presented in Copenhagen. The audience was very much interested in having their input into the papers being prepared. Organizations and groups were encouraged to send their priorities and opinions to Barbara Goode's office at the Department of State or to Vivian Derryck, the newly appointed U.S. Director of the Conference Secretariat.

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The meeting was attended by the OEF Public Information Committee and other Board and Staff. The reception at the State Department gave all of us an opportunity to see and talk with other women from around the country who are interested in the Mid-Decade U.N. Conference.

Bernice Zurbach
October 1979